

## **NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORKS**

**Moderator: Michele Higgs-Johnson**  
**June 13, 2006**  
**2:00 p.m. CT**

Operator: Good day, everyone and welcome to today's Neighborhood Networks Monthly Conference Call. Today's call is being recorded.

At this time for opening remarks and introductions I would like to turn the conference over to Ms. Michele Higgs-Johnson. Please go ahead, ma'am.

Michele Higgs-Johnson: Thank you, April. Good afternoon everyone and welcome to the Neighborhood Networks June conference call. My apologies for what can be called technical difficulties in you getting through. I want to share with you the topic for today's call, which is, "Guess Who's Coming to Your Center? Event Planning at Your Neighborhood Networks Center."

Laura Thomas, who is a fellow Technical Assistance coordinator (TA coordinator), developed the content and speakers for this call. We represent the team of TA coordinators that work with you to address the needs of the Neighborhood Networks centers around the country.

I'm sure by now you know that Neighborhood Networks Week is around the corner and that's when we will highlight the work of Neighborhood Networks from Monday, July 31 through Saturday, August 5. During that week we encourage centers to toot their horns and raise the

roof. In other words, celebrate the growth and success of Neighborhood Network centers around the nation.

The speakers who will join us today offer an abundance of expertise on this issue. But, before we introduce the speakers, let me remind you that the Strategic Tracking and Reporting Tool, also known as the START Business Plan, contains resource materials that help you to look at the capacity of your centers and to provide the foundation upon which you can organize your outreach efforts.

It will help you examine the workings that make up your center's operations and help you to highlight your accomplishments. If you have questions about the START Business Plan or resident needs assessments, or just general questions pertaining to Neighborhood Networks, please call the toll-free Neighborhood Networks information line at (888) 312-2743.

You can also visit the Neighborhood Networks Web site at [www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org](http://www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org). Again, that's toll-free (888) 312-2743, or the Web site is [www.neighborhoodnetworks.org](http://www.neighborhoodnetworks.org). I also want to remind you that a verbatim transcript of this call will be made available on the Neighborhood Networks Web site in about two weeks.

We'll take a moment now to welcome the following centers to the neighborhood. We have Pine Villa Apartments in Washington State, Thessalonica Court Neighborhood Networks Center in New York, Prudencio Rivera Martinez Neighborhood Networks Center in Puerto Rico, and Riverbend Community Center in Missouri. Good job, folks. Welcome to the neighborhood.

Now about today's discussion, nobody likes a good party more than the folks at Neighborhood Networks centers. Our plan with this call is to help you learn to approach and execute especially that for your center and toward that end Laura has assembled a great group of presenters to help you.

We have Stephanie Haddad, who is a program director with Minnesota Council of Non-profits and responsible for developing educational and training programs, including workshops and conferences.

Cynthia Brown, who's Property Manager and Center Director for the Mount Zion A.M.E. Apartments and the site coordinator for the Mount Zion A.M.E. Apartments' Resource Center as well as the President of the South Carolina Neighborhood Networks Consortium.

Joseph Mayerhoff is Assistant Vice President with the Kraus Organization, LLC and he has an extensive background in all aspects of real estate having filled many roles within the management structure of the Kraus Organization over the past 10 years.

And finally, one of our own, Paloma Costa is Training and Special Projects Coordinator with Neighborhood Networks. Paloma works with the Neighborhood Networks Regional Technical Assistance Workshop (RTAW), the National Conference, and the Neighborhood Networks Week, among other projects.

We've got a lot to fit in, in a short amount of time, so I'm going to hush and let the festivities begin.

Laura, would you like to introduce our first speaker?

Laura Thomas: Sure, Michele. First we'll have Stephanie Haddad, she will discuss insider tips on how to plan events as a nonprofit organization and involve the media, Stephanie?

Stephanie Haddad: Great, thanks. Yes, as Laura said, my name is Stephanie. I am the Program Director at the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits, responsible for planning events, conferences and

workshops here. Before working here I was involved, I was Executive Director of a Minneapolis Neighborhood Organization where we also planned events including having some parties and events at our National Night Out here.

So, a little bit of experience there and this is – I'm pleased to be invited on this call, very excited to speak about this, want to just briefly go over a few things, reasons and considerations in planning a successful event, some key questions to ask and then answer and a couple of little tips, so starting with reasons to plan for a successful event.

Planning events just in general is a unique opportunity to generate fun, generate energy within your organization and with and among participants to bring people together in a positive way that might not have the opportunity to come together, and by planning an event you're bringing people together on many different levels, including during the planning itself, bringing together a planning committee, if that's what you decide to do, bringing together partnering organizations or other key partners to think about your event and plan your event, and then, of course, bringing together community members and participants.

So, events are just a really special thing and a special way to provide a type of energy, and bringing people together that are fun and that many people want to participate in. Planning a successful event creates great exposure for your center, for your organization, for a project or program that you're doing. It enables you to be able to bring recognition, and highlight, and attention to what you're doing and who you are in a really unique way.

So, by creating a successful event you can generate that exposure that you might not have been able to generate otherwise. Planning a successful event often can achieve a unique purpose that can't be achieved outside of having the event. So, maybe the purpose is just to have fun, to introduce a project or a program that you're involved in or doing, to strengthen a relationship or partnership that you've wanted to strengthen for a while.

It causes you to highlight accomplishments of your organization, to educate people in what you're doing, or on certain issues or topics, and it can also provide a way for you to advocate depending on who's invited to the event. For example, if you choose to invite public officials to your event, maybe it's an opportunity to discuss or advocate about an issue that is important to you.

And then, finally, another reason to plan an event and make it successful is for poll networking and the relationship-building aspect. Participants can network with each other, and meet each other, and greet each other. You can build relationships with different entities and those relationships ultimately will strengthen your organization in the community.

And some other relationships that you might want to consider when planning an event include funding relationships, or a relationship with funders, relationships with the media—which I'll touch on in a couple of minutes—relationships with potential event sponsors, including local businesses that often want to be a part of your event, and relationships with even certain communities, or community members, within your larger community.

So, those are some of the reasons to plan for a successful event. Some key questions that I think are really important to ask and then to answer when planning events include, what is the purpose of the event? So, is it to have fun, to build community, to introduce a project or partnership, to bring in constituencies, to make money, what is the purpose?

And then once you've established the purpose, who do you want to attend the event and who is your intended audience? And this is a really important question in terms of how you are then going to market the communications, or market your event to the public.

The next question is how do you get your intended audience to come? So, what is the draw and oftentimes, you know, there's a lot to consider in planning an event, but depending on the type of

the event, the draw, the thing that can get people to come, can be something like, you know, a key speaker, or a band, or a public official that you think will draw people to your event. I mean, I think that it's really important to consider, what is the purpose, and how will you get people that you want to attend?

What do you want attendees to get out of the event? So again, do you want them to have fun? Do you want them to learn about your program?, etc. And, then finally, and this is a big question, is once you've thought of and answered all these questions, how will you accomplish all this?

So, and that, and I think that, the how you accomplish this is a key question, and that is where you can draw in some key partnerships, a planning committee, some stuff where you can consider who might be interested in sponsoring those events, who might be interested in participating in the event to help you get the word out.

So a couple of key tips and – that are, first of all, and this is sort of repeating something that I just said, but an event is nothing without participation. So you can come up with the best idea in the world, get the best, you know, speakers, or band, or whatever there, but you really, ultimately, need to have people come to make the event a success. I mean, that's what it's all about.

And so to that end, I just want to encourage people to, when you're planning for an event, to plan in advance, which is easier said than done, but really important because sometimes you can plan, you can get the word out, but maybe you're not getting the participation that you wanted to see, or you're not reaching the audience that you wanted to reach.

And so it gives you a little chance to just like keep on getting the word out, or maybe rephrasing or reframing your message about your event to be able to attract the numbers of people and the right audience.

Again, it can be really beneficial to invite partners like other community organizations. Like I said, business funders who have a stake and interest in what you're trying to achieve and who can help you to disseminate some of the information because, like I said, they have a stake in the event that you're planning and want to reach – help you reach the audience that you want to reach.

So, that's my first key tip is to think about how you're going to get people there and then, second, our media considerations, and in terms of neighborhood and community center types of events, I would say that the best first place to go is your local, you know, media, your local neighborhood newspapers who are really interested in seeing community-building events in the neighborhood, particularly if you're inviting some local figures who would be of interest to both participants and the media.

That would be a great way to get some local media out. In terms of the bigger, like if you have citywide paper, or your citywide papers or bigger news sources, I would say to access those sources that, of course, you can promote your events through their community calendars.

Oftentimes, the bigger media sources like to see issues addressed that are larger-scale issues. For example, if you are going to do something at your event that touches on issues of, you know, crime and safety in your city.

Or, you know, here and nationally, immigration issues are kind of like, hot, you know, or big topics. Issues about education, things that will reach a larger scope beyond, you know, your immediate center or neighborhood.

You know, involving public officials, or higher-level decision makers, often get the media out. And another thing is to have photo opportunities, and you can, if you anticipate having photo opportunities at your event, like opportunities where there's going to be a launch of something

where there will be, you know, several people there who are involved in the launch of a bigger project.

Or, you know, I asked my Marketing and Communications Director here, "What do you think about media at events?," and she said, "Kids and dogs," like if you can, if you have an event where there's lots of kids really enjoying themselves and, you know, where it just seems like a really community-building, family-building event, then it's often easier to attract media.

But, you can also create photo opportunities. If you want to, you can sort of contrive them, put them together and invite the media to be there to, you know, take pictures and then learn about organization and your center and the great work that you're doing, and the way that you're building community.

So, that's it, and to summarize, you know, events can be really exciting. Make sure they're fun, make sure they involve people in a new unique and positive way and it will build and strengthen your center, your organization, and ultimately, your community.

Michele Higgs-Johnson: Thank you, thank you so much. I like the idea of the dogs and kids. Laura, you want to introduce the next speaker?

Laura Thomas: Sure, and that is Cynthia Brown. She's going to discuss how a busy Center Director, who is also a Property Manager, can plan a successful Neighborhood Networks Week too.

Cynthia Brown: Thank you, Laura. I, being a Center Director as well as a Property Manager, I have a very heavy load sometimes, as well as being the Consortium President for the state of South Carolina. But it's all fun.



But, I first had to learn to delegate, delegate and delegate. We can't do it all by ourselves. So, we have to remember in the midst of our planning that we have to plan something that's going to be effective, that's going to capture the audience that you really want to capture, and yet, make it memorable.

So, you have to get time to do a survey of what people in the community would like to have, or would like to see. For example, last year we had a block party during our National Neighborhood Networks Week and we combined it with National Night Out. And always, our fire department is very effective with us. They always cook our food.

Our police department is here with us and we work strongly with these people and the people in the community, we had different agencies come out. And all during the year we have different agencies come out each month and do different things. So, we utilize these people.

We had a management company building an apartment complex across the street, we asked them for a donation. We just utilize the people that we see first and tell them what we want to do and to help them fund it, to help them man it, our Housing Authority of Florence, they were a partner with us as well as an East Florence community, and we combined our monies and purchased the food and the different activities that we needed to do.

We just used what we had, and we had over 400 people attend this event. So, I just didn't do it by myself. I kind of went out and grabbed these people that I was using every day and made it work for us, as well as the parents in the community. We asked the parents to volunteer to help man the booths, or to pass out the school supplies, because we gave out over 200 school supplies, which was all donated.

So, we kind of worked together with the community as well as the staff we had on hand, and the staff with the other agencies, so that we could make this event really big. So, these are some of

the things that we do to keep ourselves busy and to have a successful event. We rely on other folks to help us, basically.

Michele Higgs-Johnson: So that's it, pooling your resources from all around you?

Cynthia Brown: Yes.

Michele Higgs-Johnson: Sounds like a great idea. Good to hear it from the center's perspective.

Cynthia Brown: Thank you.

Laura Thomas: Thanks, Cynthia.

Cynthia Brown: You're welcome.

Laura Thomas: We will now hear from Joseph Mayerhoff, who will discuss how to attract new participants during Neighborhood Networks Week and keep them involved throughout the year, Joseph.

Joseph Mayerhoff: Good afternoon, thank you, Laura.

Laura Thomas: You're welcome.

Joseph Mayerhoff: Public awareness is an important part of Neighborhood Awareness Week, but public awareness alone isn't really enough, you have to draw the people into your center. You can't just run an event and don't have anything that actually gets them coming into your center.

It's sort of like dropping a fishing line and a nice big fish comes along that you really want to catch, and he nibbles the bait right off your hook and swims away and is gone. You don't want the big fish to come to your barbecue, eat the hot dog, and walk away.

So, what our center does every year, we introduce a new program within the center during Neighborhood Networks Week. The programs that we run are designed to have people keep coming back into the center in order to continue to participate.

We try to do something that's fun or entertaining because that gets them involved in the first place, and once we have them in the door, then we try to get them involved in other things in addition.

Let me give you some examples, two years ago, we introduced a program, which I call Neighborhood Networks Pals and some other people who have done it have referred to it as E-Pals. Through Aspen Systems we set up a partnership with two other Neighborhood Networks centers in California.

You know, Neighborhood Networks is always pushing partnerships, well here's a sort of a unique opportunity for partnership and a very willing partner at that, another Neighborhood Networks center.

So, we teamed up with these two centers in California and we had our Center Directors contact each other, exchange information about the people that we had who were interested in participating in the program, and then we gave them each an e-mail address. Neighborhood Networks Pals, or E-Pals, is sort of an updated version of a pen pal.

So, these people were e-mailing back and forth and having an ongoing correspondence with each other, people were coming into the center to check their e-mail to see if they had gotten anything from their pen pal.

The program was especially successful with seniors, and I've shared this with other centers, I've shared this idea and found out that Don Cheney in Philadelphia had been doing it for four years before I ever even imagined it.

Now there are a bunch of centers doing it, and geographically, it's a good idea not to be so close to the center that you're partnering with just because of problems that have taken place in the past with people communicating by e-mail, or communicating by messenger, and arranging meetings. You avoid the problem by putting a good segment of the country between you and the center that you're partnering with.

Another nice little touch to this program is, if you can get a Web cam, then your e-partner can see the person on the other end of the line, at least see them once or twice so that they have an image of who they're communicating with.

The program teaches basic computer use and writing skills, and writing is becoming a real lost art, so if people can write letters, that's a really great skill for people to learn within your center.

Last year we did something very different from that, we did fantasy football. Now, fantasy football is very easy to do. You set it up on a Web site. My experts, both of whom call me Dad, tell me that Yahoo is a very easy Web site to set up your fantasy league on, but ESPN and Fox Sports are also places where you can set up fantasy leagues.

The way fantasy leagues work, for those of you who aren't familiar, we start off with a draft, all the people in your league need to be on computers at the same time. And they draft players from the

professional sports league that you're dealing with. We do football Neighborhood Networks Week because the timing of it is such that we're right before football season.

Fantasy leagues are available in all sports, so you can continue to do this at any time during the year. There's a commissioner who sets up the parameters of the league and what happens is everybody picks their players and then the computer, every Sunday when there are football games, analyzes each player on your team's activity, what they've done in the game, whether they scored a touchdown, how many passes they've caught; if you're a quarterback, how many completions you have, how many interceptions you have, all these statistics, and it combines it into a score.

It also sets up a schedule. You play against another team every week. And then it keeps standings like a regular league. So, of course, you aim for – you aim to win the championship in your league. If you don't have enough computers in your center, to set up a league just within your center, this is another great opportunity to partner with another Neighborhood Networks center and then you can have the draft all at once.

And, if you have too many people in your center to do it once, there's nothing wrong with having multiple leagues. In fact, it might even be fun for those of you who are involved in consortia to have one team from each Neighborhood Networks center in the consortium and have your own league.

The great thing about this is that, first of all, you have to come in and check to see that you've won every week, you have to manage your team, and you have to come in and make trades. Different players are off certain weeks during the season so you have to change who from your team is actually going to be listed as one of your regular players in a given week.

So, you have to keep coming back and that gives you four months really for your center director to walk over to the person, tap them on the shoulder and say, "Hey, you know what? While you're here why don't you take a look at Monster and see if there are some job openings available for you?," and get them into other programs.

Maybe there's Excel or Access that would help them in their job, or help them be qualified to do a better job, but they're there. They are there in your center and they are ready to work.

One of the reasons that I like fantasy football is because it has an interest to adult males and we have found adult males to be a very difficult demographic to attract to our center. So that's another advantage. And the great thing about both of these programs is there is no cost in either one of them.

This year we're planning to take our Web site live during Neighborhood Networks Week. We're going to be working during July to develop a Web site and to develop content which everybody in our center is going to contribute to.

We're going to have several pages on our Web site, one for the children, or the children and teens, one for seniors, one for adults with a focus on job search and job training, and we're going to have a Spanish page because the demographics of my particular center dictate that would be a good idea.

The key to development of the Web site is what we're going to have as an editorial board. We're going to pick participants from the center, mostly more mature adults and seniors, but we're also going to have a couple of children and teens on this editorial board.

It's very important because they will review everything to decide what should go on our Web site, what shouldn't go on our Web site, what gets a prominent position on the Web site and most

importantly, to weed out those things that are inappropriate that people will be contributing to your Web site.

I think that one of the greatest things about this will be the interaction between the young and old, because I know that the children and teens that are going to be coming into the center a lot during the summer are going to contribute a lot of the content for the Web site and they will have to deal with this adult editorial board in order to have them, in order to have their content put onto the Web site.

And, I intend to rotate this editorial board fairly frequently, every three or four months, so that as many adults as possible can participate and be active, and we can keep things fresh.

These are just some ideas, I'm sure you can come up with many more but these are some ways in which people who find out that, "Hey, there's a Neighborhood Networks center during Neighborhood Networks Week" and make their first visit to the center at the same time. And, hopefully, continue to come for the whole year.

Laura Thomas: This all sounds so exciting. I like the idea of the editorial board for the Web site getting everybody involved. And that fantasy football I'm sure is a hit.

Joseph Mayerhoff: Oh, yes.

Laura Thomas: Definitely. Thank you Joseph, we'll now hear from Paloma Costa.

Paloma Costa: Great. Well, all our speakers had some great ideas for event planning and for actual events and I'm here to let you know that there are a lot of resources available through Neighborhood Networks itself to help you support and plan your event for Neighborhood Networks Week.

Regardless of what type of your event you're planning, or what stage of planning you're in, I highly encourage you to visit the Neighborhood Networks Web site page on the Neighborhood Networks Week page on the Neighborhood Networks Web site at [www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org](http://www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org).

That can be accessed through the Events Publication and Data link on the lower left-hand side and from there there'll be links for the poster contest information, the Save the Date Card, the Registration page and the Event Planning Guide.

Most of you should have received the Event Planning Guide by mail, but if you have not, or if you would like an electronic copy, it's available through that link. And, in that Event Planning Guide there is a variety of information on the history of Neighborhood Networks Week, what Neighborhood Networks Week can do for centers, and special event ideas.

Some of those special event ideas include hosting an open house, a grand opening, arts and music festival, award ceremony, community carnival, and a block party. There are also ideas for theme-related days and different activities that are associated with those days including Career Day, Family Fun Day, Education Day, Reading is Fun Day, Safety Awareness Day, Technology Day, Health and Fitness Day, Holiday Fun and information about national activities which will be posted on the Neighborhood Networks' Web site as they become available.

An additional event that is not listed in the Event Planning Guide that's new for 2006 is National Night Out, a unique crime and drug prevention event sponsored by the National Association of Town Watch. And this year, National Night Out will take place on Tuesday, August 1, during Neighborhood Networks Week. National Night Out is designed to heighten crime and drug prevention awareness and strengthen neighborhood spirit and police community partnerships,



which ties into the 2006 Neighborhood Networks Week theme of: Uniting Neighbors.

Strengthening Communities.

Neighborhood Networks centers can celebrate National Night Out with a variety of events and activities such as block parties, cookouts, visits from local police and sheriff departments, parades, exhibits, flashlight walks, contests and youth programs.

To receive more information about Neighborhood Networks Week and National Night Out, centers can log on to the [www.nationalnightout.org](http://www.nationalnightout.org) Web site where they will receive an informational kit.

Going back to the Event Planning Guide, there are a variety of resources that can support all different types of activities, including National Night Out events. Those types of resources are event planning, steps to success, getting the word out, and having resources media advice.

There are also sample media documents including a sample proclamation, sample media advisory, sample news release and sample public service announcement, and sample event invitations that centers can use to make the most of their event and involve the media as Stephanie had mentioned earlier.

For those of you who have access to travel and to attending the RTAW in Boston, next week, June 21 to 23, there will be an event in the morning of Thursday, June 22, about planning Neighborhood Networks Week and involving nonprofit and for-profit partners to assist with providing resources for Neighborhood Networks Week, and for the few that are attending, I would highly encourage you to attend that workshop as well.

Stephanie, or one of the other speakers, mentioned the importance of planning ahead and I couldn't agree with her more. Nearly 30 centers are already registered for Neighborhood

Networks Week and some of the events they are planning include National Night Out, Community Resource Fairs, Grand Opening, Health and Fitness Day, Digital Storytelling Premieres and Multicultural Festivals.

Those activities and those registered centers can be found on our Web site at [www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org](http://www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org) and once you register your event, your event will be listed as well. Registration is easy. You can either register through the Neighborhood Networks Week page link or you can go to the What's Hot section on the right-hand side of the [www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org](http://www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org) Web site where there'll be a link to the Registration Web site.

From there, you fill in your contact information and basic information about your event. You can also receive a Registration Form if you call our toll-free number at (888) 312-2743 and you would be able to register by phone or submit a Registration Form by fax.

Registration is a way to have your event published on our Neighborhood Networks Web site and also to communicate what types of events are going on around the country to us, and frequently, we do highlight those events and spotlight them in e-mail blasts and the marketing of Neighborhood Networks Week to other centers as well.

Michele Higgs-Johnson: Sounds good, anything more? Everything you wanted to know about special events. I wanted to give our listeners an opportunity to call in. We will run a few minutes beyond the 4 o'clock hour since we started a hair late, so April, do we have anyone in the queue for questions?

Operator: The question and answer session will be conducted electronically. If you would like to ask a question, simply press the star key followed by the digit one on your telephone keypad. Also if you are using a speakerphone, please make sure your mute function is turned off to relay a signal

to reach our equipment. Once again, if you would like to ask a question or make a comment, press star, one at this time. We'll pause for just a moment.

We'll first hear from Orlando Lorie of U.S. HUD.

Orlando Lorie: Hi, I have a question on the time for planning the event ahead of the event. What's a good rule of thumb? How many weeks ahead, or are we talking a few months?

Michele Higgs-Johnson: Who would like to take that question? Orlando wants to know how far ahead we want you to start planning an event.

Laura Thomas: Cynthia Brown.

Michele Higgs: Anybody there? I guess I would say it depends on the complexity of the event and how many people you want to get there.

Cynthia Brown: Exactly.

Michele Higgs-Johnson: And the thing you're trying to do. Anybody want to take it from there?

Paloma Costa: OK. I can take that question. This is Paloma. I don't think it's ever too early to start planning. It really depends on exactly how big the event's going to be, how many different organizations you're going to get involved.

In the Event Planning Guide there is a, on Page 13, there's a list of successful planning with different steps on what should be done first, and then there is a page on media tips which has different guidelines starting from one month prior to the event through after the event, and that might help out.

Orlando Lorie: The reason I'm asking is last year I planned an event and it took us at least – the rule of thumb was – at least to start 60 days prior to the event. We're trying to get some of the people interested in this area.

I'm in Lubbock, Texas, by the way. And I was just wondering considering logistics, what would be a time frame in some of the events and I know it's a different – it depends how complex is the event, but in general, just as a rule of thumb, that's all we're looking for.

Cynthia Brown: In general, if you want to plan an effective event, it shouldn't take you 60 days. But, if you want it to be that good, then you can use, as long as you're utilizing the time that you're planning, not just plan something and change your mind, you need to stick with what you want to do. And if you know what you want to do, you can do it within 30 days.

Orlando Lorie: Well not in Lubbock, I tell you.

Cynthia Brown: OK Orlando.

Paloma Costa: You know Orlando, I encourage you if find that if you don't have enough time, sometimes it easier if you bring more people into the equation. I know it's not always easy, but there are volunteers available to help as well.

Orlando Lorie: Well thank you very much, appreciate your comments.

Joseph Mayerhoff: I would just also want to add that, in terms of publicizing your event, I think 30 days is probably a good amount of lead time, enough time to get the word out, and not too much time that the idea gets stale from all the hype.

Orlando Lorie: Yes, that's the other issue that I have come across, and I'm trying to do it in both in English and Spanish and it's – sometimes I have to go to the – a week before schedule.

Cynthia Brown: Again, when I started, this is Cynthia, and I remember when I started I said delegate, delegate, and delegate. Find someone who you can really trust that can do certain things for you and put it in their hands and let them be in charge of it.

Michele Higgs: Good point. Thanks so much. April, anybody else on the line?

Operator: Yes, Elaine Bennett with HUD.

Elaine Bennett: Hi Cynthia, Brad.

Cynthia Brown: Hi Elaine.

Elaine Bennett: ... with the HUD Neighborhood Networks Columbia, [SC], Field Office. I just wanted to ask a question of Cynthia because I noticed that Stephanie and Cynthia touched on a point that many of the centers have a problem with and that's getting a target audience to participate.

And Cynthia indicated that she has, she gets parents involved, and I was just wanting Cynthia to please, because I've seen some of the events that they've had at Mount Zion and we also appreciate everything that she does for the Columbia field office. And I wanted her to just point out what particular issue, or what particular thing, that she does to get parents involved in attending these events.

Cynthia Brown: Well thank you Ms. Bennett, and I just ask them. And I'm not one of these people that are afraid to ask a question. If I ask someone and if they say no, I go on to the next person. But, I try to include everybody.

So, if a person has a child, or if they don't, if we're doing something on this property, I like to get everybody involved and I ask them to participate and they can either say yes or no. And most times people are going to say yes, especially if they see their neighbor out, they're going to come on out and help too.

Elaine Bennett: The challenge is down, right?

Cynthia Brown: Right.

Michele Higgs: Thanks a lot.

Cynthia Brown: You're welcome.

Michele Higgs-Johnson: April, do we have anyone else on the line?

Operator: Pamela Dodge with Housing and Urban.

Michele Higgs-Johnson: Thanks.

Pamela Dodge: Hi. Hi Michelle. I would like to know if anyone has an easy event suggestion for all elderly projects. Something that wouldn't be too hard that they would be able to participate in, you know, it's a little different dealing with families. If you can offer advice, it would be appreciated.

Joseph Mayerhoff: The decals that I had done originally were a huge hit with the seniors. In fact, it was a much bigger hit with the seniors than it was with anybody else and it's really very easy to plan and there's no cost involved and you can involve a broad range of centers with it.

Pamela Dodge: Thank you.

Joseph Mayerhoff: You're welcome.

Michele Higgs-Johnson: Great, great, April.

Operator: And there are no further questions at this time.

Michele Higgs-Johnson: No questions just now? One question that I wanted to have and I think this is for Stephanie about contrived photo ops. And then I know that was tongue-in-cheek, but I'd still like to know does that mean, you know, just sort of giving one of your students who's gotten an A in math, a certificate or something? How are we going with that?

Stephanie: Yes, maybe contrived wasn't the best word, but yes, like if you know that, if you have a – that's a great example. If you have a program that works with youth, you know that there's a time or place during your event when you're going to recognize that person, that child, or that young person, and you think that local media might be interested in coming, that might be a good time to invite them. And you might want to plan that in your event, so that it would be an appropriate or great time for media to come, or other people that you want, you know, other partners to come during that time as well.

Michele Higgs-Johnson: OK. I just wanted to get a sense of, you know, what kind of events you might want to think about, even small ones I guess would make a good photo opportunity.

Stephanie: Oh yes, absolutely.

Paloma Costa: Can I recommend, this is Paloma, beyond Neighborhood Networks Week, photographs are a great thing to put on your Web site and to market the center to other partners and stakeholders. In addition to stakeholders, we are also interested in photos.

So, if you have any pictures from your Neighborhood Networks Week event from this year, please do send them to us and we will put them on our Web site and post them and you can send them through the Neighborhood Networks Web site e-mail address, or call the Neighborhood Networks hotline.

Laura Thomas: I have a question for both Joseph and Cynthia, just for the gentleman who called from Texas. Could you share how far in advance you both prepared for your Neighborhood Networks Week last year?

Cynthia Brown: This is Cynthia and I did it probably within 60 days because I wanted to involve the other partners and I wanted to give them enough time to get their monies in to decide what they wanted to do. And we had to prepare because we did a National Night Out.

We had to do it earlier because we had to order the paraphernalia for National Night Out and you have a certain length of time in which to do that, and it might have been 90 days. But you have to order that stuff ahead of time, or else they'll run out, so we did it a little earlier and a little longer planning, but everything worked out fine because everybody knew what they were supposed to do and everybody complied and it was a great event.

And as a result of that, we did have people come into our center, the people in the community wanted to get involved in our center because they thought that we were doing a good thing here.

Michele Higgs-Johnson: It's a good sell.



Joseph Mayerhoff: Would much that there, the nature of the event that we had really doesn't require very much work ahead of time. The only thing that you really had to do was publicize it. In fact, with fantasy football you really can't do anything in advance because you really have to have your draft right before the football season when you know who actually made teams and who's on what team.

So it's not something that you can really do long ahead of time. All you can really do ahead of time is publicize it, so 30 days was really a good period of time in which to get the word around and just to really peak at that point in time.

Laura Thomas: OK, great.

Michele Higgs-Johnson: April anyone else on the line?

Operator: It looks like we have a follow-up call from Orlando Lorie of U.S. HUD.

Orlando Lorie: Hi, I'm also the Web Coordinator here in Lubbock, in the field office in Lubbock, and I encourage people to give us articles, especially in some of these centers and let's put it on the Web site, not necessarily on the Neighborhood Networks site, but on the HUD Field Office site as well. Is that something that's being done out there?

Michele Higgs-Johnson: Can anyone respond to that question?

Joseph Mayerhoff: I can't say that I've done it, but it's something that I definitely would do as my site goes online next month.

Orlando Lorie: And sometimes you can link the local Web coordinators to the network and that's what I've been trying to do here. I've been linking to a lot of different areas when you look at the Web

site at the Lubbock Web site. Actually, in the West Texas – we're in Texas, right, at the Texas page Web site.

Cynthia Brown: And this is Cynthia, and I do share all of my events, so whatever happens at (Mount Zion), I share it with Ms. Bennett who's my coordinator for the state.

Orlando Lorie: And that shows a lot of advertising out there, free advertising, that we can show up.

Cynthia Brown: Yes.

Michele Higgs-Johnson: Excellent idea, excellent. Thanks Orlando.

Orlando Lorie: Thank you ma'am.

Michele Higgs-Johnson: April, anybody else out there?

Operator: There are no further questions at this time.

Michele Higgs-Johnson: OK folks. We've covered the topic I think, and got some good, Laura has a question.

Laura Thomas: I have one more question and this is for Paloma. How late can someone register for Neighborhood Networks Week?

Paloma Costa: Centers can register all the way through the end of Neighborhood Networks Week so if you have event on Friday and you want to register Friday morning, we encourage you to do so.

Michele Higgs-Johnson: Thanks, excellent. Now we got the word on Neighborhood Networks Week.

Thank you so much for your questions. Thanks everybody for listening. Thanks for being with us

this afternoon. I want to thank our speakers Stephanie, pardon me, Carolyn, Joseph, Paloma, thank you all for sharing with us today.

Our next conference call will take place on Tuesday, July 25, 2006, and the topic will be "Making It Work: Developing Your Center's Workforce Development Program." We've given our listeners a lot of information to work with today when planning their events.

And I want to wish all of you success and excitement as you plan your events for Neighborhood Networks Week, and just in case you forgot, that's July 31 through August 6, 2006. Also, I want to remind you that the resources available to you are on the Neighborhood Networks Web site and that's [www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org](http://www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org), and you can also call the toll-free information line at (888) 312-2743.

Paloma already reminded us about the RTAW in Boston next week, Wednesday through Friday, June 21 through 23, and there are a number of good presentations including one that will help you with your preparations for special events.

Once again, I thank all of our speakers for sharing with us today. I thank all of you for joining us for this conversation. Cynthia, Stephanie, Joseph, Paloma thanks so much. Thanks to my colleague Laura Thomas for pulling it all together. Take good care. We'll talk with you again next month.

Group: Thank you.

Operator: That concludes the teleconference. Thank you all for your participation. You may now disconnect.

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